

C An Apolo=

gie or defence agaynst the calumnacion of cer-
tayne men, which preferring wylfull wyl and
carnal reason before the playn trueth of Gods
gospel, (do sclaundre those men, which for the
better seruinge of God with a more pure
conscience, according to his holy word)

haue abandoned theyr liuinges and
vocation, abydinge as exyles
in poore estate oute of
theyr natyue coun-
trye.



Exodi. xxxij.

O Lord let our hartes euetmore ioye in
thy testimonies, folowe not the multitude to
doe euill.

Psalm. lxxij.

Lyke as when a man waketh there re-
mayneth nothing of his slepe, (how pleasaunt
foeuer it was to the sleper.) So shall there be
nothing left of theyr Goddes. Where throughe
they thought the selues happy in this worlde.

But thou (**O Lord**) shalt rather make eue
theyr pictures to be abhorred of eue
rye man in the Cytie.

IISSS.

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The mercy

and fauour of God oure heauenly father, purchased to vs by the merites of our Sauour Christe. Communicated to vs by his holy spirite. J. T. Wisseth to the gentle Reader.

The thing that moued me to vndertake, to answer this sclaūdre (good frende) was not. That I either thought or iudged my self so wyse or so learned, as I could set it forth with such wysdom, or eloquenche: as so good a matter, and trewe cause requyred, or as yf some learned mā had vndertaken it: neyther do I write it, to thende it should be comen and receyued of all men, or haue free accesse into all places: but onely to you my frend: and to that towne where ye presently habyte (the place of my birth and education.) Als also for the excuse of those good man of that towne, whiche in lyke maner with me haue abandoned & geuen ouer theyr rowmes, which men as in Greke and Latyn auctours they be ignoraunt. By reason whereof, they cā not explicate nor make knowē to you, the cause why they haue chosen this paynefull exyle: so they wisse you, and all other honeste men, to know and vnderstand: that neyther lightnesse, rashe wyll, or inconstancie, hath moued them there vnto, (as some of that towne, vntreuly & agaynst theyr owne knowledge doe surmyse & blowe

21. ij.

blowe abroad.) But a good zeale grounded vp
on Gods trueth, confirmed by the opinion of
all good and godly learned men: and that they
might with the more pure conscience serue god
in the congregacion of the godly, where Gods
moste holy worde and Sacramentes are pure-
ly preached and ministred. In the which place
as the Prophete Dauid saythe: It is better to
dwel in a most pooze degree, then to abyde in
wealth and prosperous estate, among the wic-
ked. Which mynd and good purpose of theirs,
as a iuste excuse to satisfie the mindes of good
and godly men which principally they desyre.
They haue earnestly desyred me, to make kno-
wen and to put forth the same in writinge: and
to adresse this Apologie to you: Knowig right
well, that although for lacke of learninge and
wysdom, I shall not be able to satisfie theyr
expectacion, or set it forth according to the wor-
thynges of the matter. For that I neuer haunted
scoles or anye vniuersities. Nor neuer was
brought vp in any other state then with them,
as a most pooze man and Souldiour, (simple
and vnworthye) yet because they shall aswell
perceyue my good wyll and preste seruyce to-
wardes them, as charitie and our consuete fa-
miliaritie woulde, and compelleth me: as also
for that my parte is in it participating, the life
obloque and sclaumbze with them. For that we
haue wrought al one lyfe facte, and attempted
one entrepryse. These thinges wayed and pro-
poned, I haue the more gladly graunted to ful-
fyll theyr requestes, praying you my frend of
charitie to graunt me thus much fauour. That

yf I eithershal write or pene any thig & agreeth
not w your mind, & the opiniõ of other mē, not
to cõdene it at the first sight, because it maketh
not for your purpose, but rather cõfarre it w
scriptures of God, the trew touchstone, which
al mēs workes ought to be iudged by, & to the
which I pray you submit your cõsciēce: & yf ye
find & it varie not frō & sacred word of god, nor
dissent frō the mynde of good & godly learned
mē. The embrace it as a manifest trueth, desy-
ring god & father of al mercy for his sones sake
Christ, in the worke of his holi spirite, to make
you consent to it. And to testifre our doynges
to be lawfull and consonante to Gods gospell.
Staying your opiniõ with this our aunswere
putting other men to silence by the same.

And now to come to the causes which ye pro-
poned to me in my house, saying: ye were sente
frō many good honest & godly mē, which not a
litle merueled, & I had set away into flanders
my wife & childre: & much more that I n. y self
was also delibered to folow. Wherin, as ye al-
ledged, they iudged I wrought vnwisely & not
according to knowledge, but rather preferred a
wil more wilful, the godly wise, knowig as well
my pooer estate & litle riches w my great fami-
ly, as also & inciuil nature of this nacio w small
relief, saying: Win a short time begging to ouer-
take me, for & I nether had arte, faculte, or occu-
pacio to liue by. More & if god should tourne &
impietie of this time, I should neuer be able to
reouer the like rowme or office, & so al my life
wāder in misery, which they as my very fren-
des much lameted, with many other causes by
you alledged, thereby to staye my iourneye.

Which

Which perswasions as to the fleshe, they seemed harde and vneasi to be borne, and tollerated of any worldly man. So I for my parte do moste hartely praise God, whose good worke it was: they not abashed me nor altered my purpose, as ye my frende know right well.

Secondlye ye alledged agaynst me the doynge of other men, which ye named both good honest, and godly: and of an vpright pure conscience, which men obserued the ordre of thys tyme.

Thyrdely ye sayd that yf my conscience were so strayght laced, as that I could not consente, to the putting of my name into the booke among others, you for your parte iudged it no synne, nor felte any repugnance of conscience for your so doyng, wherby ye iudged it no offence. And yf it were sinne, as ye sayde ye doubted, yet it was a light synne, and easy to be forgeue saying: God must remitte greater offences, or els ye should neuer come in heauen.

Well, now my frend accordinge to my conscience a little knowledge, receyued from Gods word: I wyll aunswere youre three causes alledged agaynst me. Prayinge you to accept the in as good parte, as with an vnfayned harte a good mynde I doe adresse them to you.

And as to the fyrste cause which ye preferred to staye my goynge: whereas you a manye good men lameted that misery should oppresse me, and that specially in a straunge land farre from frendes. Where I should be compelled eyther to begge or labor, which I neuer had done nor was brought vp in such extremitie, wherefore

fore they feared I Should not be able to endure
it. I aunswere them with S. Paul, I haue lear-
ned in what estate soeuer I am, there with to
be content. I can doe all thinges thorough the
helpe of Christ. I also saye with S. Paul, Shall
tribulacion, or anguisshe, or persecucion: eyther
hunger, or nakednesse: perill, or sworde, sepa-
rate vs from the loue of God? More thesame
Apostle sayth: Godlines is great ryches, yf a
man be cōtēt with that he hath, for we brought
nothing into the world, and it is a playne case,
that we can carye nothing out. What Should it
auayle a man to winne the whole world, & lose
his owne soule? I most hartely reioyse in god,
that I haue not receyued his gospell in wayne.
For I had rather with Lazarus enioy a poore
estate, begging my bread in myserye & a quiet
cōscience: thē with dyues to wallow in welth,
and for pleasure sake lose the lyfe euerlasting.
Christ Iesus the alone Saniour, our Lorde &
mayster, thought it no robberye, as S. Paule
sayth, beyng very God, to take our nature vpo
him, and for our sakes to become man in moste
lowe degree. Who as a most pure paterne and
godly example for vs to folow, walked in this
vale of miserie, in great humilitie and poore es-
tate, saying: I foxes haue holes, & the byrdes
of the ayre haue nestes: but the sonne of man
hath not a place to put his head in. O my frend
these places of Scripture are not written in
wayne, but for our learninge: that we through
patience and comforte of the Scripture might
haue hope. It is geuen vs as S. Paule sayth:
not onely to beleue on Christ: but to suffre for
his

Phil. iij.
Rom. viij

Timo. vi
Mar. viij

Luke. xvi

Philip. ij.

Luke. ix

Roma. xv

A. iij.

his

Rom. viij
ij. Tim. 7.

Psal. lxi
Sapien. 3
Ecclesi. 2

his sake, yf Christ Iesus my Lord and maister
walked in such poore estate, Shall I a wretched
sinner, beyng but earth & wormes meat, hauing
no certētie of my life, for a litle pleasure in this
worlde lose & life euerlasting? God forbid, re-
mēbring & yf we wil raigne w Christ, we must
suffre w him. Now my frēde yf I & other men
shoulde doe as you & other do, what nede we shoulde
suffre w chaiste? For yf, whē as & gospel by god
his special mercy, & auctoritie of the king is set
forth, I the embrace it as a truth in those daies
there is no cause why I shoulde suffre for & gos-
pel, as in & time of & godly Prince king Edward
& first. But whē for our vnthākefulness & wret-
ched liuing, god doth take his gospel away frō
vs, as it is come to passe in our lād at this day,
to make trial of his elect according to this say-
ing: As gold is tried in & furneys, so god doth
trie his elect, yf I then (as you & most men doe
now i these daies) disseemble w & trueth, which
before I embraced, cōfirming my selfe to & im-
piete of this time. There is thē no cause why I
shoulde suffre w christ, no mā wil lay any mat-
ter w my charge, yf externally I obserue & law,
and thē were these wordes of suffring w christ
in vayne, & the gospel such a trueth as I liste to
make & applie it. Yf I shal perfwade my selfe to
please christ, & to be in fauor w God, & yet wil
not suffre w christ. My frēde in mine opiniō it
is not in our chose, to take vp christes crosse as
we list, & & way we would: but as god our hea-
uēly father in christ hath destīned & appointed
vs vnto: wel, let & mā beware which obserueth
the ordre of this time, maynterninge his owne
doyng, & cōdēning other mē for not doying the
same,

same, & yet will say: he is gods seruant. Truly
I wil not cōdēne hi, for God shal be his iudge:
But surely I thinke he might aswell saye there
were no god, for god is none otherwise knowē
& honored of him, but as his fleshy wyll list to
knowe & serue him, not captiuating his iudge-
mēt to s word of god, by s which word god is
truly serued & worshipped, & not pleased as we
imagine. We are cōmaunded to hartē to s voyce
of christ & to heare him, which sayth: he s wyll
be my disciple let him forsake him selfe, & take
vp his crosse & folow me. Now ys s mā which
will liue i al securite & pleasure of this life, whē
God maketh trial of his church, wil nether suf-
fre h him, nor take vp his crosse & folow him &
yet will say he hath right in his doyng, surely
this place may be verified of him. Not al they
which say, lord, lord shal entre into s kingdō of
heauē, but he s doeth s wil of my father which
is in heauē: not s hearers of s law, but s doers
shal be instified. Christ sayth: Broade is s way
that leadeth to destructiō, & many go in therat,
but narrow is s way s ledeth to saluaciō, & few
ther be which find it. Christes flock is bat a li-
tle flock. The cause my frēd, why it is but little &
the narrow way not fōūde out, is: because s of
our nature we are sinful, & delight in s corrup-
cion thereof, pleasing our selues w corruptible
thiges, not delighting in heauēly misteries, for
flesh & bloud is not capable of heauēlye know-
ledge. Therefore hath God geuen vs ouer to a
lewde mynd, perswading oure selues to be in
the righte, when as manifestlye we are in the
wōg, according to the saying of S. Paul, whē
as they knewe God & dyd not worship him as
god, the lord gaue thē ouer to their ow n lustes

Mat. xviij

Mat. xvi.

James. i.
Roma. ij.

Mat. vij.
Lufe. xij

Roma. i.

Exod. xx.

Mat. xxij.

Exod. xx.

Deut. vi.

And because that whē we had f light of Gods
Gospel among vs, we embraced not, nor wal-
ked in the same. Therefore hath God suffered
darkenes & errour to ouerwhelme vs: & yet we
wyll saye, we are in the right, & may dissemble
for the time, saying: God knoweth our hartes.
My frende be not deceyued: God requyrezth f
whole mā withall our powers to serue him ac-
cording to the fyrst cōmaundemente, where it
is writtē. Thou shalt loue the Lorde thy God
withal thy harte, soule, & mynd, & withall thy
powers. How we obserue this precept when
as we prostrate our selues before an Idol par-
taking with the vngodly: the Lorde at the last
day shall reuele & make openly knowē. It is like
as yf a married womā should submit her body
to the vse of another mā: & when her husbāde
layeth the offyce to her charge, He aunswereth:
husband be not angrie for my so doying, for al-
though I abandoned my body to that mā's vse
yet I reserued my hart wholly to you. My frend
I thinke there is no man, beyng of any godly
knowledge, could digest that aunswere of his
wyfe, or take it in good parte: but condemning
her as an aduoutresse would repudiat and for-
sake her. And shall we perswade oure selues to
please God, beyng a ialouse God (as the scrip-
ture calleth him) who requyrezth of vs f whole
man to serue him withal: when as we geue the
greater parte of his creation to the seruinge of
Idols, saying: God knoweth & hath my harte.
Well God deale wth vs according to his greate
mercy, & geue vs an hart to repēt & knowledg
our offences, least we perishe in our sinnes: for

as God is merciful, so is he iust. Christ saith: Luf. xiiij
 he that setteth more by father or mother, wife, Math. x.
 childre, landes, riches, or countrey, then by me, Lufe. ix.
 is not mete for me, nor worthy to be my disci-
 ple. Reade the whole Chap. in Lufe, & examen
 what the buylding of the towre signifieth. Ye
 haue heard often taught & preached, that, he y
 wyl professe the Gospel in tyme of prosperitie
 should cast accompt to him self, what may hap-
 pen to him for the same, in the dayes of aduer-
 sitie. Or els in wayne hath he begon to buylde,
 and shalbe called a foolishe buylder. I thinke
 there be a great many of honest & good men in
 that towne, which in times past haue bene fer-
 uent Gospellers, and yet at this daye loue the
 trueth, sorowing in their hartes the impiete of
 this tyme. That yf it were not for feare to lose
 theyr liuinges, riches, & countrie: & to become
 poore in a straunge land, would folowe & seke
 Christ in the wildernes: searching with paine
 to seke out the narowe way. But alas so colde
 is oure loue to Christe, which hath so dearelye
 bought vs, that we could be content to loue him
 so that we lose not by him. But these doubt-
 es to tast miserie, poull vs from folowing poore
 Christ. So frayle is our lyfe, & such a lumps of
 synne & corrupte tabernacle, we are wrapped
 in. That seyng the best waye & knowing y bet-
 ter parte, we can not chuse it, nor walke in the
 same. I pray God this sentence be not verified
 vpo vs. He that knoweth his maysters wyll &
 doeth it not, shalbe beaten with many strypes.
 By many tribulacions must we entre into the
 Kingdō of heauē. Christ saith: he that putteth
 his

Apoca. xij

Lufe. xij

Lufe. ix.

Mat. 24. 7.

putteth his hand to the plough, & loſeth backe, is not mete for the kingdō of heauē. It is not y^e enough for vs to haue begon in the knowledge of Chriſt, oneles we perſeuer & folowe him to the end. Cloſing our dayes in his peace, which peace of Chriſt is better in a beggers boſome, at the howre of death, thē a mountayn of gold to a ryche mā with a troubled conſciēce. Chriſt ſayth: my ſhepe heare my voyce: now my frēd, becauſe the voyce of oure ſhepherd Chriſt, is not to be heard in that towne where ye dwell.

John. 7.

Therefore I & other men of that place, haue abandoned our lyuinges & vocaciō, to ſeke oure ſhepherd Chriſt that we might heare his voice and participate his ſacramentes purely miniſtered according to his holy worde, & in ſ place to our great comforte to prayſe him: where, to our great conſolaciō we now remayne. In the which companie how ioyfull it is to be amōg.

Pſal. 84.

The Prophete Dauid deſcribeth in the lxxxiij Pſalm, which I moſt hartely requyre you, not onely to reade, but diligentlye to marke & examine, what the Prophete meaneth in the ſame, & by that place to iudge whether we haue righte in our doynges, or are iuſtly to be condēned, O my frend in that towne where ye preſentely inhabit, the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt hath bene moſte plenteouſly preached & purely taught ſpace of ſeuen yeares. And yf there ſhoulde no good ground appeare after ſo much & long ſowing of ſo good ſede, to bring forth encrease of good corne, it mighte well be called a curſed place, & an yll ſoyle. I ſaye this my frend, yf al me of that town, which were called goſpellers

ſhould

Mat. xiiij.

Mar. iij.

Should obserue & orde of this vnhappye tyme,
submitting the selues to this vngodly religio.
What a cause of triumphe Should the papistes
haue to reioyse: perswadig & blowing abroad
no trueth or religion to be trew, but onely that
which they now teache & set forth, because all
me obserue the same. But for because they see a
noubre of good & godly learned me in the losse
of their liues, & spilling of their bloud, to testifi-
fy it an vntruth. Als also a great noubre of ho-
nest me of good cōuersacion doe departe theyr
countrie, leauing their riches & liuinges: some
of the beginneth to doubt, whether his religio
be a truth or not. Other which are of the worst
sorte of papistes, & that most setteth forth this
religion, be ashamed to make greate boaste of
their doctrine: for that in & tyme of the gospel,
lyke dissemblers & hipocrites, they gaue place
to the trueth, and would in no wyse suffre for
theyr religio. And now they seing men to dye
and suffre penurie in a straunge land, it maketh
them poul back their to much boasting of their
religion, so that by this meanes it appeareth
most playne to him that hath but halfe an eye,
that the gospel is a moste manifeste trueth and
pure religion, in that men suffre for the same,
which is promysed to all them, that will lyue
godly in Christ Jesu. These causes my frend &
many other, moued me with other me to vnder-
take this painful iourney, & greuous exyle. As
amen the booke of genesis, & pōder wel & doynge
of & old Patriarke Jacob, who forsoke no smale
substaunce & riches beside & comodite of his cou-
trei & dwelling place, onli as & scripture sayth
because

ij. Tim. iij

Gen. 43.

Because of famyne that occupied þ̄ soyle and
 land where he dwelte, and in much payne and
 great trauayle in his olde dayes & a greate fa-
 milie drew into Egipte, a people in maners &
 condicions, not agreeyng with his nature. Yf
 our father Jacob dyd vndertake this long and
 painful iourney, to seke meate for the body: cō-
 sidre my frend, how much more we that are cal-
 led Christians, & which haue professed Christ,
 ought to seke for the fode of the soule, which is
 the preaching of Gods holi word & participā-
 cion of his holy Sacramētes: by the which we
 waxe strong in fayth, pacience, & all good wor-
 kes, as Christ our mayster sayth: Man shal not
 lyue by bread only, but by euery worde þ̄ pro-
 cedeth oute of the mouth of God. Christ com-
 maundeth by Esay the Prophet, saying to his
 people: Alway, away, get you out from thence,
 and touche no vncleane thing. Jeremie in ano-
 ther place cryeth, saying: Slee away from Bas-
 bilon, euery man saue his lyfe. O my frend do
 ye thinke that the word of the spirite of God,
 speaking so earnestly & with such vehemence,
 by the mouthes of those holy men: to cōmaūde
 vs to auoyde the cōpany of Idolaters, is writ-
 ten in vayne & to no purpose. Truly in my sim-
 ple iudgement, & as my conscience testifieth to
 me (ruled by Gods holy spirite) They ar write-
 ten specially for our dayes, that we shoulde be
 without al excuse, whē as God shal lay & make
 open euery mans dedes. S. Paul hath the lyke
 saying: Come out frō amonge them, & separate
 your selues frō them, saith the Lord: reade out
 the Chap. and note the wordes well. And lette
 youre

Mat. iij.

Esay. li.

Jerem. li.

ij. Cor. vi.

your conscience witnesse with you, who hath \S right. It is a thig very difficile to touche pitch, and not to be defyled. I wyl knitte vp the first parte of your matter obiected against me with this cōclusiō. The. viij. Chap. to the Romains, and so consequentely all the whole Scripture thzough, doth teache these two pōinctes. That fyrst, God the father in his free mercy by hys sonne Christ hath chosen vs, withoute any deseruing on oure partes, accordinge to this sayinge: Those which he appoynted before, them also he called: & which he called, them also he iustified: which he iustified, them also he glorified. Secondly, he dyd it to this ende: that as the scripture sayth: they might be made like to \S Image of his sonne, in suffring with him. Now my frēd, yf we wil perswade our selves, to be chosen in Christ: and wyl not suffre with him, and yet thinke to raygne with him. I pray God we beguyle not our selues.

To come to the second part, In that ye layd agaynst me the doynges of other men, which bring both good and godlye obserued the order of this tyme. Laying to my charge, why I woulde be more precysse and scrupule of conscience, then other men they beyng godly.

To that sayinge I aunswere. The doynges of men, is no presidente for a Christen man to folowe, how good soeuer they be called, onles they dyrecte theyr wayes, according to Gods holy worde. Howbeit folowing the counsaile of S. Paule. I wyll reporte well of them, as Christen charitie, woulde to iudge the beste in hid thinges. Therfore for that I cannot know
with

with what mynd they do it, I muste folow the
 admonicio of the Apostle, to thinke wel of the.
 Onely this I know, it can not ignoraunte of, it
 by experience do proue it taste in my fraile life
 and corrupt nature (which is altogether sinnes
 ful) that terrour of lawes maketh vs to stoupe
 and decline to thynges, sinning agaynst knowe
 ledge, for the preseruacion of this vncertayne
 life, it keeping of our goodes. O that we would
 remembre this saying: All fleshe is as grasse, it
 all the glorie of man is as the flowre of grasse,
 which sentence wel wayed would kepe vs fro
 dissembling in that thing whereof our conscience
 accuseth vs: it to the which my harte in no wise
 can agree to consent. Christ sayeth: who soeuer
 shall lose his life for my sake, shall finde it. More
 I am a ialous God, that cannot suffre my ho-
 nour to be geuen to any other, nor no part ther-
 of. The Lord in these wordes doeth accommo-
 date him selfe to vs, as oure weake nature can
 know him. Our fleshe is in no one cause so sone
 moued or prouoked to wrath, as in that sighte
 that may styrrer vs to ialousye, which offence
 we can almost by no intercession or sute stant-
 ly remitte or pardon. And God which seeth al
 our doynges, it before whose presence althynges
 are open, beholdeth howe we dissemble wth his
 loue makinge familiar frendship it league wth his
 enemies. Wel these wordes I am a ialous god,
 require in vs an vpright pure, vndefiled conuer-
 sacio, lest by our dissimulation we prouoke the
 lord to anger. O my frend it god which in his
 mercy hath so dearely bought vs (not with cor-
 ruptible gold or syluer, but with his moste ho-
 ly it precious harte bloud, requyrez of vs our
 whole man, wth mind it conuersacion to serue him,

i. Petri. i.

Mat. xvi.

Exod. xx.

i. Petri. i.

According to this saying: Be holy, for I am holy: be not partakers with & ungodly: for what concord hath Christ with Belial? or how can we reconcile darkness with light? Now my friends examine these wordes well, & Iudge whether it be the acte or parte of him, that would be reputed & taken for a perfect Christian man, to communicate & be partaker with idolaters, and to mixe his name into the booke among them, to great scandalore of Gods Gospell. In that the papistes may triumphe, that all we (and specially such as were called fervent gospellers) do embrace and follow the order of this unhappyyme: whereby they boaste & glorie their religion to be most true. On the other part, consider how ye wound & offende the conscience of your weake brother, not yet grown to full perfection of knowledge, who hath his eyes open upon you, who seying you to do the same, thinketh it a lawfull acte, & so ye are the cause of his fall. S. Paul sayth: when ye sinne agaynst the brethren, & wounde their weake conscience, ye sinne agaynst Christ. Reade the Chapt. yf S. Paul had that mynde in lawfull thinges: that rather then he would offend the conscience of his weake brother, he would never eat fleshe while he lived, how much more my frend ought ye to have a conscience to offend your brother, in an unlawfull thinge? As he to him sayeth Christ: that offendeth one of these little ones. It were better for him to have a millstone tied at his necke, & so cast into the sea. Cal to your remembrance, & digest well the worthy commendacion geut to Cleazar in Gods booke call
S. i. led the

Leuit. xix.
i. Petri. i.
ij. Cor. vi

i. Cor. viij

I. ut. xvij.

17. 1. I led the Bible. That were as his frendes moue
with pynne & pitie (hauinge no taste of an
right conscience) perswaded him for the saue
garde of his lyfe to eate swynes fleshe, whiche
in no wise he would do, for that it was against
the lawe of God, & his conscience. And when
his frendes perceyued that for no perswasion
he would not eate it, they earnestly oportune
and counsailed him to make a countenance,
although he had eaten some, which dissimulation
Eliazar knowing it to be against Gods worde
aswell fearing the yll president & example, the
might grow thereof to other men: beyng yet
weake, and vnpurged in Gods worde, as al
remembering his honorable lyfe, good conuer
sation & old age, would in no case make coun
tenance to eate, nor vse any such dissimulation
but rather preferred to dye, the he would con
terfecte suche hypocrites. Loke & reade the text
calling for wysdome & knowledge to God. Com
ming to the booke with a pure mynde, & ye shall
easily perceave, whether the obseruers of the
tyme walke in that puritie of lyfe, whiche
chiefely requyred in him, that in tyme past ha
bene called a gospeller. There is another notable
lesson in Eliazar to be marked: that when
his frendes perceyued the constancie and pure
mynde of him, that he would in no case consent
to theyr perswasions & counsaile: they conuer
ted theyr angrie & friendship into malice. So
yf that Eliazar had consented to that impietie
they had had a goodly clofe to maynteyne an
coloure theyr doynge to be good, with they
saying: Lo, such a man doth dissemble, who

both good & learned: and so they would haue
iustified theyr doynge to be lawefull by hye
example. which I leaue persequing constant-
ly to the death, with those that coloured consci-
ence, and vnpure mynde of theyrs. My frende
I wryte this because some men of that towne
will reporte euill of me and other men which
be gone awaye, not for that they can laye any
wickednesse or vngodlye conuersacion to oure
charge (God be glorified therefore,) but only
of an yll mynde: because we wyl not consente to
theyr doynge; and ioyne with them in obser-
uinge the ordre of this religion. Well, let them
say what they list. God from whom no secret
is hyd, & which knoweth the hartes of al men,
can iudge with what conscience we haue aban-
doned our vocacions, & countrey: & howe glad
we would be to haue theyr good wyl & comen-
dation, doynge also as they do, so we knew and
were assured to please god. But thus much for
an aunswere to the second poynt. I woulde yf
it pleased God, I had sufficient learning and
type knowledge in his holy word, by thesque
to argue their doynge. But this much I wite
and thinke, that yf they be good men feainge
God, and of a good conscience, as ye saye they
be, which obserue the ordre of this tyme, (and
truely I thinke they be so a greate nombie of
them,) then I say they haue a ptecke of conscie-
nce, which testifieth to them, theyr doynge
to be lawefull. And which before God with
feares and sorow of harte they doe bewaile,
not standinge in defence of theyr doynge, as
ye my frende doe, which in my simple opinion
B.ij, doth

doeth agrauate the offence before God and
men.

To answer the churche popule, in that ye
make it so facill and light, beleuing it to be no
sinne, saying: The Lorde must remitte greater
offences. Well, I pray God ye presume not to
much in his mercy, for he is not mercyfull, but
to them that repent their wickednes. I coulde
somewhat more by the scriptures dilate & ap-
prooue the same, as vnlearned as I am: but these
fewe leaues are ynoughe, to hym that hath a
good conscience. The Byble sayeth there is a
waye which seemeth right vnto a man, but the

Deu. 5. 12 ende of it leadeth to destruction. Ye shall not doe
euery one of you, & seemeth right in your owne
eyes, but that which I commaund you, sayeth
the Lord: because thy synne is forgiven thee.

Ecclesi. v Be not therefore without care, neyther heape
one synne vpon another. And saye not: tussle
the mercye of the Lorde is great: he shall for-
giue me my finnes, be they neuer so many. For

Isaye. v. lyke as he is merciful, so goeth wrath fro hym
also, & his indignacion cometh down vpo syn-
ners. Wo be to them, that call euyll good, and
good euyll, which make darkenes light, & light
darkenes: that make sowre swete, and swete
sour. Now my frend, yf ye may doe & which
ye comit without offence, the ye haue scripture
to assure & warrant youre doynge. Or els you
nor no mā els, (be he neuer so wel learned) can
defend the same, but to be sinnefull. For saide

Roma. 14 Pauls saith: Whatsoeuer is not of faith, the
same is synne. Reade the xv. and xix. Psalm of
Dauid, & iudge your selfe by them. And wher
y

and difference betwene the sinners of Iudas
falling with rebellion: be weladvised
ye doe. Remember, Esau sought re-
penteance with teares, and found it not: Iustifye
not your wickednes, least ye prouoke the Lord
to anger. The Publican confessinge his sinne
sought mercy: but the Pharise, iustifying him
selfe, was condemned. The Prophete Dauid
though all his Psalmes desyreth God to par-
don the sinnes of those which fall of frailtie,
yet calleth on God for vengeance, to fall vpon
those, yea, fourfold, which synne of obstina-
cie. I pray God the father of al mercy, a Lord
of al consolaciō for his mercy sake in the blood
of his sonne Christ, to make you withal them,
that in this tyme of impiete fall through frail-
tie: and for feare of lawes in the nōmbre of
those men, which the xxxij. Psalm speaketh of.
And thus an ende according to my one talente
recepted. Farewell in the Lords Iesu withall
them that vnfaignedly call vpon the name of
the Lords.

And thus my frende I ende this my booke
simple writing, prayinge you not to be
dissatisfied with the same. And yf ye fynd any
matter in it, whiche agreeth not with youre
opinion, and wherein ye thinke I erre (I straye
from the scriptures, aduertise me) and I shall
moste gladly reuoke and recante the same. But
yf ye fynd that it agree with the word of God,
then I pray you craue to saye or thinke our doc-
trines to be yll, bryng a meane & aduocate for
vs to all good men: which through ignorance
shall finelye repute of our goynge awaye.

Thus

Lebre. 12

Lu. xliij.

much to end with. I believe in
the grace of my committment, and
in the grace of my vocacion. And I believe in
the grace of all good men, and in
the grace of all good scriptures, and in
the grace of all more sufficiente warrents, and of all
to quiet my conscience, and assure my soule
then the sclaunderous reppores of vncha-
table men, can moue me to offend, or can
me repent my doynge. Forasmuch as the
Lorde Iesu, who for his mercie
saue strengthen me to perse-
uer to the ende.

Psalm. cxix.
The Lord is our refuge in all tribulacion
that assaile vs.

The eyes of the Lorde are vpon them
that feare him, and vpon them that keepe his
commandment. That he may deliuer their soules
from death, and nourish them in the time
of hunger.

Matthew. xvi.
In the year of our
Lorde. 1555. The
11. day of July.

Matthew. xvi.
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